

Singapore Sends Air Force Plane To Search Missing Malaysia Airlines Aircraft
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SINGAPORE, March 8 (Bernama) -- Singapore has sent a C130 Hercules aircraft for a search and locate mission for the missing plane of Malaysia Airlines (MAS), which carried 239 people, Xinhua news agency reported the city-state's air force as saying on Saturday.

The Boeing 777-200 aircraft, flight number MH370, departed Kuala Lumpur at 12.41am local time Saturday and was scheduled to land at Beijing International Airport at 6.30am. The Malaysia Airlines said Subang Air Traffic Control had lost contact with the aircraft at 2.40am.

Malaysia Airlines is still unable to establish any contact or determine the whereabouts of flight MH370, the airlines added. "The last known position of MH370 before it disappeared off the radar was 065515 North (longitude) and 1033443 East (latitude)," it said in a statement.

Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said on Saturday morning on his Facebook, "Our thoughts and prayers are with the passengers and crew, and their families."

He updated his Facebook account in the afternoon. He said he had contacted Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak to express his sympathies and concerns over the missing plane, and to offer help with the search operations.

"Hope the plane and people on board will be found soon," he added.

Meanwhile, Vietnam has already sent aircraft and marine rescue vessels to search for the missing Malaysian plane, according to a Xinhua report datelined Hanoi.

Pham Hien, director of Vietnam's Maritime Search and Rescue Coordination Center (MRCC) Zone 3, said this to Xinhua on Saturday.

The MRCC Zone 3, based in southern Vung Tau city, has deployed a specialised rescue ship SAR 413 to the waters off Vietnam where the plane was feared to have crashed to help search for the plane, Hien told Xinhua on the phone.

Meanwhile, one AN 26 aircraft has left the Tan Son Nhat International Airport in southern Ho Chi Minh city to join the search and rescue work, Vietnamese state-run news agency quoted the Vietnamese Ministry of National Defence as saying.

Helicopters and marine police vessels are also ready to join the search and rescue as soon as the plane is located.

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